

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 INT-05 EB-07 COME-00 L-02 RSC-01 SSO-00

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FM AMEMBASSY FREETOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 654

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE FREETOWN 0122

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EFIN, EIND, EINV, SL, US

SUBJECT: BETH STEEL NEGOTIATIONS WITH GOSL

REF: A. STATE 5392 B. FREETOWN 103

1. SIERRA RUTILE (SRL) VICE PRESIDENT FRASER, WHO JUST RETURNED FROM VISIT BETHLEHEM, TOLD EMBASSY JANUARY 22 THAT TIMING OF NEXT BETH STEEL VISIT TO FREETOWN NOW VERY UNCERTAIN. FRASER SAID THAT IN VIEW UNACCEPTABILITY TO BETH STEEL OF GOSL'S LAST FORMULATION ON PARTICIPATION ISSUE, HE HAS BEEN INSTRUCTED ATTEMPT GET INDICATION WHETHER GOSL PREPARED CHANGE POSITION OR INSISTS STANDING PAT. IN CONTRAST GORDON ACCOUNT OF GOSL POSITION (PARA 2 REF B) FRASER SAYS GOSL'S LAST FORMULATION IN LETTER TO BETH STEEL WAS THAT GOSL RESERVES RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE IN ACCORDANCE NEW MINING POLICY AND WILL NOTIFY BETH STEEL AT LATER DATE OF EXTENT AND TIMING SUCH PARTICIPATION. FRASER SAID THAT IF NO EVIDENCE OF GIVE DISCOVERED, IT POSSIBLE THAT ONLY REP OF NORD RESOURCES WILL VISIT FREETOWN TO INFORM GOSL THAT BETH STEEL CONSIDERING PULLING OUT. IF FRASER ABLE DETECT SOME WILLINGNESS NEGOTIATE ISSUE FURTHER, THEN IT POSSIBLE BETH STEEL GROUP WOULD COME SEEK OBTAIN AGREEMENT ON SPECIFIC PERIOD IN WHICH GOSL WOULD AGREE REFRAIN FROM PARTICIPATION.

2. FRASER STATES HE PERSONALLY NO MORE HOPEFUL NOW THAN HE WAS IN DECEMBER (FREETOWN 2463) THAT RESOLUTION PARTICIPATION

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ISSUE POSSIBLE. FRASER SAID THAT, WHILE HE HAS DISTINCT

IMPRESSION THAT TECHNICAL LEVEL GOSL OFFICIALS SUCH AS GORDON
BELIEVE BETHSTEEL POSITION REASONABLE, GOSL DECISION ON
PARTICIPATION ISSUE WILL CLEARLY BE MADE AT CABINET LEVEL
WHERE UNDERSTANDING OF PRACTICALITIES OF SUCH INVESTMENTS
MUCH MORE LIMITED.
SULLIVAN

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